

Matthew 7

Notes:

Matthew 7:1-6 – Kingdom Principles – Part 5

Scriptures:

1 Thessalonians 5:21 - Test all things; hold fast what is good.

1 John 4:1 - Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are of God; because many false prophets have gone out into the world.

John 7:24 - Do not judge according to appearance, but judge with righteous judgment.

1 “Judge not, that you be not judged.”

G2919 – “to evaluate v. — to form a critical opinion of something (either positive or negative) by examination or scrutiny.”

G2919 -

Notes:

Kingdom Principle #13 – Don’t be Judgmental with Believers

This may be one of the most frequently misapplied verses in the whole Bible. Jesus is not saying that all judgment is evil and wicked. If that was what He was saying, then He violated that command in verse five when He called them hypocrites.

When interpreting Scripture, we must be careful not to strain the interpretation beyond its proper meaning. This is a verse that has often been strained to the point of making it harmful to God’s people.

‘judge’ = “to evaluate v. — to form a critical opinion of something (either positive or negative) by examination or scrutiny.”

Most people interpret judgment as a determination of evil, sin, or wickedness. Judgment is also required to determine whether something good, true, or right.

When a judge is judging at a dog show. They are not judging which dogs are better than other dogs. They are determining which dog best represents the standards established for it breed.

When a judge rules in the courtroom, they are supposed to be ruling based on the rule of law to determine if the prosecuting attorney has provided enough evidence that the law was broken.

Christians are called to make judgments (1 Thess. 4:1; 1 John 4:1). Jesus clarifies and tells us that our judgments must be based in righteousness.

Jesus is speaking against a judgmental spirit – against someone who is always looking for faults in others. Being hypercritical of people or things is destructive and ungodly. All God’s judgments are based on His character and righteousness.

The hypercritical person looks for faults in others and then imagines a wicked motivation. Instead of thinking the best, they imagine the worst.

Scriptures:

2 Corinthians 5:10-11 - For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad. 11 Knowing, therefore, the terror of the Lord, we persuade men; but we are well known to God, and I also trust are well known in your consciences.

² For with what judgment **you** judge, **you** will

be judged; and with the measure **you** use, it

G3358 – “measure (quantity) n. — how much there is or how many there are of something that you can quantify.”

will be measured back to **you**.

Notes:

The point is that we are to be merciful in our judgments. Be as merciful with others as you want God to be with you.

In the future there will be two judgments. God will separate the sheep from the goats. The sheep are those who are God's people through faith. The Goats are people who rejected God and Christ in willful unbelief. The unbelievers will be judged for their sins and experience the eternal consequence of rejecting Christ.

Believers will also experience a judgment, but not for sin. Jesus took our judgment to the cross. When He died, the eternal consequence of our sins was wiped away. The judgment we face will be of the works we did in this life. All our deeds will be evaluated as good or evil, right or wrong, wicked or righteous (2 Cor. 5:10-11). All the wrong ones will be burned up and the good ones will be rewarded. Jesus is saying that hypercritical people will have most of their works burned up and without reward. They will spend eternity in heaven with God, but they will miss out on much of what God wants them to have in heaven. That is the eternal consequence for hypercritical Christ-followers.

The temporal consequence is broken fellowship with God. Having a critical spirit is contrary to God's nature and He cannot commune with the same intimacy He desires. A critical spirit is very ungodly.

Do we have the courage to pray, God, judge me in the same way I judge others.

I have heard people say they aren't critical; they are just fruit inspectors. I am called to inspect the fruit that I put in my basket, but we are not called to inspect all the fruit in the whole store.

Scriptures:

3 And why do you look at the speck in your

G991 – pay attention

G2595 - splinter

Notes:

If we are going to be critical of others, we must begin by being critical of ourselves. Jesus gives a sarcastic and almost comical illustration of what He is saying. I imagine Him acting this illustration out to show how foolish it is.

brother's eye, but do not consider the plank in

G1385 - beam

The 'speck' is some perceived weakness or failing in someone else. If we look hard enough, we can find something wrong with anyone. Jesus is saying that before we even attempt to help someone with their 'speck', we need to deal with our 'plank.' The 'plank' is our weakness and failing. This requires humility before God.

your own eye?

We naturally hate our sins when we see them in others. Jesus wants us to hate the sin in us, more than the same sin in others. Our judgmentalism may come from our guilt over our sin.

Scriptures:

4 Or how can you say to your brother, 'Let me

Notes:

remove the speck from your eye'; and look, a

G1544 -

plank is in your own eye?

Scriptures:

Matthew 5:3 - Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

John 8:3-11 -

Then the scribes and Pharisees brought to Him a woman caught in adultery. And when they had set her in the midst, 4 they said to Him, "Teacher, this woman was caught in adultery, in the very act. 5 Now Moses, in the law, commanded us that such should be stoned. But what do You say?"

6 This they said, testing Him, that they might have something of which to accuse Him. But Jesus stooped down and wrote on the ground with His finger, as though He did not hear.

7 So when they continued asking Him, He raised Himself up and said to them, "He who is without sin among you, let him throw a stone at her first."

8 And again He stooped down and wrote on the ground. 9 Then those who heard it, being convicted by their conscience, went out one by one, beginning with the oldest even to the last. And Jesus was left alone, and the woman standing in the midst. 10 When Jesus had raised Himself up and saw no one but the woman, He said to her, "Woman, where are those accusers of yours? Has no one condemned you?" 11 She said, "No one, Lord."

And Jesus said to her, "Neither do I condemn you; go and sin no more."

5 Hypocrite! First remove the plank from your

G5273 –
pretender,
insincere person

own eye, and then you will see clearly to

G1227 -

remove the speck from your brother's eye.

Notes:

We must be discerning in our relationships with others. We are called to love one another and minister to one another. That includes helping them to see things they may be blind to. But we can only do that once we have allowed God to show us the things we are blind to.

"The refusal to be judgmental does not mean a refusal to be helpful." (Augsburger, 1982) page 90

Before we judge others, we must judge ourselves. The first beatitude helps us to do that (Matt. 5:3). When we see ourselves as we are, we are better able to see others as they are.

"Jesus does want us to discern the sins and shortcomings in others, but He want us to see them through clear, self-judged eyes – eyes that are tender and compassionate." (Hughes, 2001) page 236

Jesus illustrated this principle in the account of the woman caught in adultery (John 8:3-11).

The eye is one of the most delicate parts of the body. Great care must be taken when attempting to remove something from the eye to avoid damaging it. The same thing is true when helping someone deal with their shortcomings. It must be handled very carefully, gently, patiently, and delicately. It must begin with love for the other person and an overwhelming desire to be a part of helping them to the good God desires for them.

Scriptures:
John 8:36 - Therefore if the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed.

Proverbs 23:9 -
Do not speak in the hearing of a fool,
For he will despise the wisdom of your words.

6 "Do not give what is holy to the dogs; nor

G40 -

G2965 - a more wild dog, or a street dog, capable of violence and filthy habits – bad person - sexually immoral, implying perversion.

Notes:
'dogs' were unclean animals to the Jews and were considered as beasts. This term was also used to describe unbelievers who were capable of the vilest kinds of things. 'swine' or pigs were also unclean and could be used for both Jews and Gentiles to describe someone who rejected God and walked in their own ways.

cast **your** pearls before swine, lest

G906 - throw

G3135 -

G5519 - pig

The most common interpretation is about being careful about who you share the gospel with. Discretion must be used when sharing the gospel. Some might respond with hostility toward the hope we have in Jesus.

Jesus is calling us to make a judgment about how people are acting. Are they acting like brothers, or are they acting like unbelievers?

they trample them under their feet, and turn

G2662 – despise, show utter disdain

But this verse goes much further than that. The holy things of God are not always received well by unbelievers. All of God's Word is holy. Wisdom from God is holy.

and tear **you** in pieces.

This can be a very challenging truth to apply. How do we know when to share and when not to share. It requires a great deal of faith and spiritual wisdom. It requires depending on the Holy Spirit to lead.

As believers, we live as people who believe God's Word is true and the fountain of all truth. We know the power of the truth – freedom (John 8:36). We walk in that freedom and our desire is that others would also know that freedom. But not everyone is ready to be free from their bondage – they love their sin too much. If the Spirit of God has not prepared them to be free – if we attempt to speak the truth they need to hear, we will be casting our pearls before swine, and they may turn on us (Pro. 23:9).

We must also examine our own hearts in this. Have we ever rejected, despised, or silenced someone who attempted to speak truth into your life?

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